DEMOCRATIC

GERMAN REPORT

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(Photomontage by John Heartfield, 1934)

All together we can prevent it happening!

PEACE ON THE BALTIC

Democratic Germany Appeals to Northern Neighbours

The Government of the German Democratic Republic has appealed to all states bordering on the Baltic to oppose plans for re-activating old nazi naval bases on the Baltic as part of NATO plans for aggression.

Here is the full text of the appeal, published on September 2nd:

The Government of the German Democratic Republic regards it as opportune to represent the interests of the whole German people in a question which is of great importance to the maintenance of peace, and which is attracting increasing international attention.

The German imperialists have begun to include the Baltic Sea area in their war preparations. The Government of the German Federal Republic is rebuilding old, and constructing new, marine bases on the West German Baltic coast. According to West German press statements, about two thousand million marks have been allocated to the Federal German naval programme, 365 million marks of which are for expanding the Baltic sea harbours of Kiel, Flensburg and Eckernfoerde.

Thirteen of the twenty-one West German naval squadrons, which are all equipped with rockets and other modern weapons, are to be stationed on the Baltic Sea. The contract for twelve destroyers has already been signed. The first of the new West German u-boats — intended specially for operations in the Baltic — went into service recently.

The reconstruction of the West German navy serves the creation of NATO military bases in the Baltic Sea area. It has the full support of the USA and other NATO states, since it opens up the way for the aggressive aims of the NATO states.

Military circles in the Federal Republic openly demand that units of the West German naval forces be stationed in Danish harbours. Danish strategic positions on the Baltic Sea are to be taken over by West German naval forces through the creation of a joint NATO Baltic Fleet Command under West German high command.

At the instigation of West German military circles there are to be joint West German, Danish, British and French fleet manoeuvres in the Baltic Sea in September, and conferences of American, British, French and West German admirals in Kiel. This shows with what pressure the German imperialists are pushing the reconstruction of their naval forces.

The planned construction of West German atomic bases in the Baltic Sea area puts atomic weapons in the hands of former Nazi admirals who are today again in control of the West German navy and who openly announce their aggressive aims.

The German people and all other Baltic sea peoples have not forgotten what suffering and sorrow German imperialism brought them in the past. Its strategic position on the Baltic was a constant threat to the Baltic countries, especially to Sweden and Norway. The Polish People's Republic, Denmark and Norway suffered terrible material and human losses during the Hitlerite occupation. The Polish population was decimated by the barbaric fascist policy of destruction, the Soviet Union suffered inestimable damage. A large number of Danish and Norwegian citizens were dragged off to Germany to forced labour or murdered in the fascist concentration camps. In Sweden those times of daily threat of fascism to national independence and security for its citizens have not yet been forgotten.

The West German policy of revenge and chauvinism again threatens the security of the Baltic states. The aggressive plans of the Federal Government in the Baltic Sea area represent a serious danger to all states on its coasts — including neutral states like Sweden and Finland — let alone Denmark, which is already looked upon by West Germany as a receiver of orders and as a deployment centre.

The Government of the German Democratic Republic considers it its duty to warn all states on the Baltic Sea of the dangerous developments to which German militarism is leading. Peaceful cooperation between the Baltic states would make the Baltic Sea a firm link between them, would make a full use of the Baltic Sea for peaceful purposes possible and would save the Baltic peoples the heavy burden of an armaments race which will be the inevitable result of the erection of NATO bases on the Baltic coast. The transformation of the Baltic Sea into a NATO base of operations in a future atomic war is a fundamental part of the over-all planning of West German military circles for a future war.

If peace and security are to be maintained in Europe, then determined steps must be taken against the irresponsible activities of the West German militarists before it is too late. The Baltic Sea must be transformed into a sea of peace and not into a cold war area of tension and, finally, an atomic war battlefield.

In its constant efforts to maintain peace in the Baltic Sea area, the Government of the German Democratic Republic calls on all governments of Baltic states to take their stand against the building up of new West German naval bases on the Baltic, against the revival of the old German navy and against the setting up of NATO bases under West German command on the Baltic, and not to permit such a threatening development.

The Government of the German Democratic Republic considers it opportune to declare to all Baltic states its willingness to negotiate on the conclusion of bilateral or multilateral agreements for the purpose of building up economic, communicational and cultural relations between the Baltic states, and to undertake mutual non-aggression pledges.

In full agreement with the entire peace-loving population of the German Democratic Republic, the Government of the German Democratic Republic declares itself ready to support all steps calculated to prevent the militrisation of the Baltic Sea area through German militarism and to secure the Baltic as a sea of peace.

Our cover

Our cover is the work of John Heartfield, a leading artist of the German Democratic Republic, who invented the art of political photomontage nearly forty years ago.

Hundreds of his best works, most of them already historical documents in the fight against war and fascism, are now on show at a special exhibition of his works in East Berlin.

In coming numbers, GERMAN REPORT will present readers with other examples of his work.

NO MORE WAR...

... says the banner carried by young West Germans at this impressive demonstration in Frankfurt/Main on September 1st.

The demonstration, organised in connection with the West German general elections on September 15th, was called by "Antimilitarist Action" supported by the youth organisation of the Social Democratic Party, the Anti-Conscription Fellowship, and other peace bodies.

Other banners at the demonstration, which was attended by more than 5000 young people, read "Be active, not radioactive", "Down with Adenauer and Conscription", "Listen to Albert Schweitzer", and "We are allowed to drill, but not to vote".

LEIPZIG FAIR'S DOUBLE BUSINESS

Foreign trade agencies of the German Democratic Republic did more than twice as much business as they had expected at the Leipzig Trade Fair at the beginning of September, it was officially announced on September 9th.

Target figure set for imports and exports at the fair was 450 million marks: actual business done was well over 1000 million marks. Export contracts were concluded at the fair for over 800 million marks, half with socialist countries and half with capitalist countries.

The fair was attended by 7145 exhibitors from 36 different countries, and visitors to the fair — over a quarter of a million of them — came from 81 countries.

Exports from the German Democratic Republic will be 25% up this year over last year's figures, Deputy Prime Minister Heinrich Rau disclosed on August 31st.

The major part of Democratic Germany's foreign trade is with the socialist countries — almost half the total foreign trade is with the Soviet Union — but trade with the capitalist half of the world is becoming more important from year to year, Minister Rau stated, in his speech opening the autumn trade fair in Leipzig.

He gave the following sketch of trade relations with various states of the capitalist world:

Northern Europe. Trade with Finland is steadily expanding on the basis of fully normal relations between the two countries. Trade with Denmark, Sweden and Norway has not reached the level possible, and particularly in the case of Denmark the Danish licencing regulations are an obstacle to further expansion.

Britain. "We are glad to see that many M. P.s and commercial circles have demanded a normalisation of trade relations with our Republic". Despite various obstacles, the main one being the lack of a trade agreement between the two states, trade with Britain has reached twice the 1956 volume this year. At the moment, however, Democratic Germany imports from Britain twice as much as it exports to Britain, and this is not a healthy state of affairs in the long run.

France. Trade with France is 116% up on 1956. The existing trade between the two countries could easily be considerably increased if the present trade agreement were broadened.

Italy. "The efforts of commercial circles on both sides have finally led to the conclusion of a trade understanding, but it is regrettable that this only came when the trade exchange had fallen to 55% of the volume in the preceding year."

Egypt. Trade with Egypt this year has more than doubled compared to 1956, and has already reached the level forseen for 1958. This will make it necessary to make a new agreement providing for a considerably greater volume of trade.

Syria. The trade exchange with Syria has expanded by 120% this year compared to 1956.

Sudan. Trade with the Sudan is 340% above the 1956 level this year.

Other African Countries. First trade contacts have been established with a number of African countries such as Nigeria, Ghana, Morocco and Tunisia.

Egyptian Trade Office in East Berlin

Egypt will shortly open a permanent trade office in East Berlin, it was officially announced on September 7th. The agreement to establish this permanent office was reached in the course of negotiations between an Egyptian Government delegation, headed by Egyptian Trade Minister Dr Mohamed Abou Nosseir, and the Government of the German Democratic Republic.

A trade agreement between the two countries, covering an exchange of goods valued at nine million Egyptian pounds during 1958, was also signed.

NEW SOVIET NOTE TO WEST GERMANY

The Soviet Government handed a note to the West German Government on September 7th, warning West Germany against arming with atomic weapons, and pointing out that German unity could only be achieved by negotiations between the East and West German states.

Here is the passage of the note dealing with the two German states:

"The Government of the (West) German Federal Republic attempts to present the situation as if the reunification of Germany could be achieved by foreign powers. In fact, however, it is the Germans themselves who will have to reach agreement on the possible steps for the restoration of the unity of the German state. There is, and there can be, no other solution of this question ...

"The existence of the (East) German Democratic Republic as a sovereign state is an unalterable fact, and it is not affected by the fact that the Government of the German Federal Republic clings to the 'non-recognition' of the German Democratic Republic. Practical steps to overcome the partitioning of Germany are unthinkable without the participation of the German Democratic Republic.

"However disagreeable it may be to leading circles in the German Federal Republic, they will ultimately be forced to recognise that the path to reunification leads over negotiations between the Federal Republic and the German Democratic Republic. It is naturally the duty of the four Great Powers to support the creation of a unified, democratic and peaceloving German state by means of negotiations between the German Democratic Republic and the German Federal Republic."

The Soviet note gave full support to the latest unity proposal made by the Government of the German Democratic Republic, which forsaw the withdrawal of both halves of Germany from the power blocks as first step to the formation of a German Confederation, which in its turn could take steps for a further measure of reunification.

Holidays for Children

More than three-quarters of all schoolchildren in East Germany have been able to go away to the country, to the sea-side or to the mountains this year for part of their summer holidays — to relatives or through schools, factory trade union organisations, the Young Pioneer organisation, or with their parents.

Teachers, members of the Free German Youth, students, older schoolchildren and factory workers helped to run the camps.

The government allocated 65 million marks to the holiday programme this year, compared with just over 50 million marks last summer, and the Ministry of Food supplied over 3,000 tons of meat, 1,500 tons of sugar and 1,000 tons of butter for the camps and holiday homes.

Young Pioneer camps took care of over 700,000 children — including many thousands of small guests from France, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Switzerland, West Germany and West Berlin and other countries.

The largest numbers were in camps organised by the factories; in the Elbe sandstone mountain area alone for instance, there were 3,500 children in 57 factory camps, and in Graal-Mueritz on the Baltic Sea there were camps for 2,000 Czech, Swiss and German children.

A group of students from the Leipzig Music Institute looked after 200 children of Leipzig building workers and thirty little Hungarians.

Schoolchildren from a Berlin school practically ran their own three-weeks' holiday camp in the grounds of their school garden just outside the city. They pulled and bundled over 20,000 carrots in the neighbouring agricultural cooperative's market garden and went to the circus with the money they earned — in one of the cooperative's lorries; in return they invited children from the cooperative to join them on a week's walking tour which was also part of their holiday programme.

Holiday day camps in the big cities again took care of children who were not away, for five days a week in two three-week sessions in July and August at a nominal charge of 1 mark per session, providing a midday meal and all kinds of outdoor and indoor entertainments — swimming. sports festivals, cinema and television.

The new Shihchinshan power station near Peking recently started operation with a boiler plant for 50 tons steam and a 12,000 kW turbine built by East German firms.

T. U. Calls for East-West Contact — Then Reverses Under Pressure

West German woodworkers voted on August 2nd to establish official contact with the Woodworkers' Union in the German Democratic Republic. The vote was reversed the next day, after massive pressure from the West German TUC, which bans all such contacts.

The pioneering vote to establish East-West contact was taken as the result of a motion from the floor of the conference. One of the delegates, speaking for the motion, stated: "In the past we had the experience of the year 1933, when the German working class failed in its duty. Today we, as trade unionists, should set a good example. We have had enough speeches about German reunification; what we want now are deeds. We as workers must set this example, and not allow ourselves to be held back by those who are opposed to unity."

As soon as news reached TUC headquarters that the Woodworkers' Union had breached the ban on direct contact between unions in West and East Germany, leading TUC officials travelled to Nuremberg, site of the conference, to press for a reversal. Officials of the Woodworkers' Union submitted to the pressure, and on the next day the motion was resubmitted to the conference, and defeated by a narrow margin.

In the further course of the conference resolutions were passed calling for an all-round ban on atomic weapons, and for the abolition of conscription in West Germany.

WARSHIPS

The West German navy has ordered 150 war-ships of various sizes "as the first of a series of orders" the West German newspaper "Die Welt" reported on August 19th.

The newspaper reported that the ships to be built would include twelve 2500-ton-destroyers, which should be in service by 1960.

The first u-boat for the new navy, a reconditioned World War Two vessel, was put in service on August 15th. The London "Daily Express", commenting on this on August 16th, stated:

"U-boats again! Germany's post-war navy yesterday received its first submarine, a salvaged war-time vessel.

"The British people will read this news with dismay. The policy of re-equipping the Germans as a military nation is repugnant to them."

E. GERMAN FIRMS SHOW NEW GOODS

TV, Knitting Machines, & "Whisky"

New goods shown for the first time at the autumn trade fair include a new synthetic fibre christened "Rheumalan" which is claimed to make blankets as soft, light and warm as camel-hair; a synthetic fabric which can be sewn directly onto foam sponge for plane and car seats; and an improved elastic knitting machine for sock tops.

Many new TV set types were on show: Democratic Germany's radio industry will make 40,000 sets this year, but this lags far behind demand. Main bottle-neck has been the production of large size cathode ray tubes, so one of the most popular new sets is sure to be one equipped with a 12-inch screen, which can be converted without trouble to 17-inch screen when more tubes are available. Another new TV set shown projects a two-foot by three-foot picture on a screen or wall.

The world famous firm of Zeiss Ikon is showing for the first time a 16 mm film projector which can be linked for sound with a tape recorder.

Scotsmen will be shaken to hear that an East Berlin firm is offering "Whisky" for the first time. GERMAN REPORT promises a "taste test" as soon as the new concoction is on the market.

OLLENHAUER VISITS DACHAU

Reminder of Nazism "May Spoil Chances"

The fact that Social Democratic leader Erich Ollenhauer had visited the notorious nazi concentration camp of Dachau might not improve his election chances, the West German correspondent of the "Times" London, reported on September 5th.

The "Times" report stated in part:

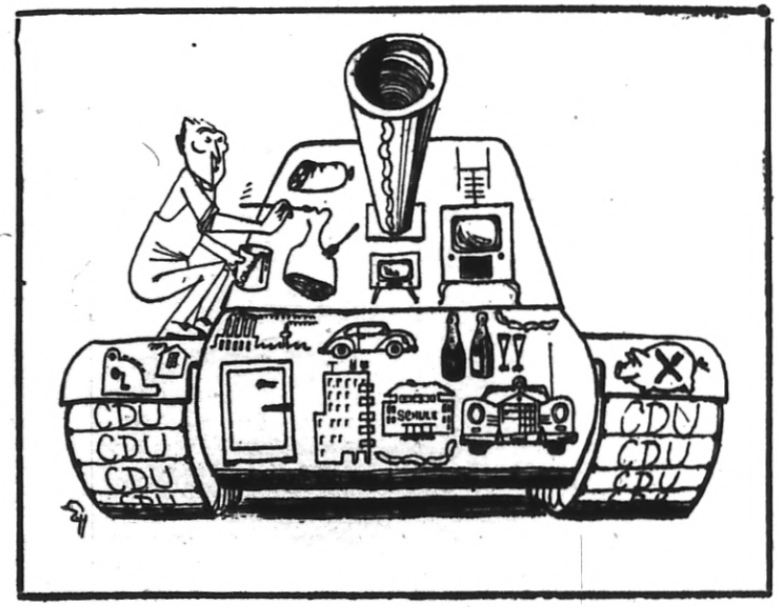
"It was the first time in this election campaign that a prominent politician had paused to look back over the years of prosperity and gathering self-confidence to remember the not so distant past. Indeed, a leader of the German Party, Dr Adenauer's staunchest coalition partner, earlier this week claimed that German atrocities were inventions of the British, but Herr Ollenhauer knows better. Many former leaders of his party died in this and other concentration camps.

"He laid a big wreath of roses at the memorial ... Herr Ollenhauer did not try to make political capital; there was no reference to former Nazis who can be found in many of the Ministries in Bonn, especially the Foreign Ministry, or to militarism and other similar charges made by his party against the present government.

"Instead he said he had come to the camp where thousands of Germans and people from other lands had found a terrible death because of their beliefs or race. The Nazis had persecuted and murdered them. Germany must not forget that this was the lowest point in their history, so that future generations would also remember it. It must never happen again; justice and law must be maintained.

"It is questionable whether Herr Ollenhauer has improved his election chances with this act of remembrance. Dachau today is a typical Bavarian town ... Just as its inhabitants preferred not to guess what was happening under the reeking chimney of the incinerator, so many Germans today seem to have absolved themselves from any responsibility for the deaths of nearly six million Jews and those Germans who had more courage than they.

"A Foreign Ministry official recently propounded the interesting theory to your Correspondent that Britain must share the responsibility, because it treated with Hitler. Dr Adenauer has rejected the charge of national guilt, and President Heuss prefers to speak of national shame; but whether it was national guilt, shame, or simply a disease, few Germans want to remember it, and it is unlikely that they will thank Herr Ollenhauer for the reminder ..."



(from "Deutsche Woche" Munich, West Germany)

Adenauer's Election Camouflage

AMERICA IN EAST BERLIN

Sacco and Vanzetti Honoured

By Mary Yeates

Two new things in German-American cooperation occurred in Berlin this month. Being of a cultural and political nature, they were quite a contrast to the American-West German military and financial collaboration which is so much a feature of State Department-Bonn relations.

First, on August 19th the German Democratic Republic radio broadcast the first European performance of an American cantata called "I Hear America Singing", by the Californian composer George Kleinsinger.

Between two years of music at New York University and another two at the Julliard School of Music, Kleinsinger, who was at the time a jazz band pianist, spent a summer as musical director of a number of Civilian Conservation Corps camps in the east of the USA. These CCC camps were set up by President Roosevelt as an unemployment relief measure during the depression and here Kleinsinger's job was to teach American folk music to those working in the CCC camps. In turn he found himself learning a whole lot of new hill-billy songs.

Although this cantata was composed in 1939 when Kleinsinger was only 25, it was not until 1957 that a European audience was given the chance to hear this music. It is significant that it was left to the German Democratic Republic — which is not accorded diplomatic recognition by the United States government — to produce this so very American work.

This cantata is a setting of excerpts from Walt Whitman's "Leaves of Grass". These poems add something to the language of literature by their use of the simple terms of labour and their savouring — one might say — of the Indian place names, many of which are familiar to us all — Ohio, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Miami, Monongahela and so on. In setting this story of America and these Indian sound combinations, the composer has succeeded in finding a musical idiom which, to me at least, adds depth and emotion to Whitman's poems.

Kleinsinger's cantata was first performed at a labour pageant in Madison Square Gardens before an audience of 20,000 and was received with a prolonged ovation. It was also broadcast in 1945 on the eve of President Roosevelt's third inauguration and a recording of this performance was in the President's personal library. Yet today it is rarely performed. Not that it is revolutionary in the sense of calling on Americans to overthrow the United States government by force and violence. It is a story of the "immigrants continually coming and landing", of the mechanics, the carpenters, the masons and is an ardent affirmation of the dignity of those people, Negro and white, who have made America what it is.

To give you some idea of the words if not of the music, here are a couple of short extracts taken from the score:

Then I saw new shapes arise —
Shapes of factories, foundries,
markets,
Shapes of the two-threaded tracks
of railroads,
Shapes of turbulent manly cities.

And the final:

I will plant companionship thick
as trees along all the rivers of
America
And along the shores of the great
lakes and all over the prairies.
I will make inseparable cities with
their arms about each others' necks
By the manly love of comrades.
For you, these from me, O Democracy, to serve my love!
For you, I am singing these songs.

* * *

The soloist in the GDR radio performance was an American baritone, the internationally-known Aubrey Pankey, who, fortunately for music-lovers here, is today a resident of East Berlin. As a man who has personally experienced oppression in his own country and who has used his voice as an instrument in the fight for freedom in many countries and continents, Mr. Pankey is well fitted to interpret both the words and music of this cantata.

He was accompanied by the Radio Leipzig Orchestra and chorus who sang in English on this occasion. The whole performance was a rare pleasure which demonstrated that America has much more to give the world than atom bombs, shiny automobiles and "Confidential Magazine". It must also have been an encouragement to the composer to know that his music has a market and an audience in Europe if not at home. Along with Paul Robeson's recent songs to a London audience via transatlantic cable, surely this performance of "I Hear America Singing" opens up new horizons of cultural contacts where Washington is powerless to intervene.

The second example of German-American cooperation occurred three days later on August 22nd — the thirtieth anniversary of the judicial murder of Sacco and Vanzetti by the Massachusetts authorities in Boston in 1927. On this occasion a commemorative meeting was organised in Berlin entitled "The Price of Freedom", which consisted of a talk by a former American professor, John Wolfard, also now resident in East Berlin, a group of American songs sung by Aubrey Pankey and recitations by the popular actor and actress Hans-Peter Minetti and Gisela May.

Approximately half of this meeting — which surely must have been one of the very few to mark this occasion — was devoted to the talk. In his very moving tribute to his fellowcountrymen Sacco and Vanzetti, Professor Wolfard, himself a victim of the witch hunt, traced the story of the frame-up conviction for murder of these two anarchists who proved in court that they were not and could not have been at the scene of the crime. But as the speaker said:

". . . it was deemed necessary to mobilize the entire machinery of the great Commonwealth of Massachusetts — the press, police, churches, the president of Harvard University, the courts, the governor himself — and bring it into action for seven long years, in order that, on August 22nd 1927, despite the appeals, demonstrations, marches and petitions of millions upon millions of ordinary people all over the world, in Paris and Peking, in Moscow and New York, in Berlin (maybe some of you here tonight remember the large demonstrations in Berlin or Hamburg or Frankfurt), in Rome and Calcutta, in London and, Buenos Aires, two simple, kindly men, a good shoemaker and a poor fish peddler, might be put to death in that monstrosity of the electrical age — the electric chair."

And when the speaker mentioned the German demonstrations, there was a murmur of assent from those who had participated. Indeed, the first political demonstration attended by the German interpreter (who did

an excellent job) was the great 1927 meeting for Sacco and Vanzetti in the Berlin Lustgarten.

Saying that he was sure that Sacco and Vanzetti would not want this evening to pass without mention being made of the martyrs of the American working class and the martyrs of the struggle of Negro Americans for first-class citizenship, John Wolfard went on to make a terrible indictment of the American ruling class which has systematically killed and trampled on its own workers from the ten Irish immigrant miners, members of the Molly Maguires, who were hanged in 1877, to Joe Hill who was shot in 1915 right up to the Rosenbergs, electrocuted in 1953, and Morton Sobell who is at present serving a 30-year sentence in Alcatraz penitentiary in still another frame-up case.

Hans-Peter Minetti then read a poem in German by Fritz Jensen based on Vanzetti's oft-quoted last speech to the court, and — in English — the American writer Mike Gold's poem written in 1927 called "Lynchers in Frock Coats". This poem is also based on Vanzetti's speeches and letters and in it Vanzetti seems to speak for so many American progressives:

The world misery tore at my heart.
In proletarian hells, in jails and factories,
I beheld the crucifixion of the poor.
And I worked, I preached with all my heart
That the social wealth belong to all,
That Humanity be free,
And this was my crime, O Mother,
For this they locked me here,
To wait for my death,
To wait for my murderers.

This was followed by two groups of American songs sung by Aubrey Pankey and Ethel Rosenberg's "If We Must Die" and "Graveside Speech for the Rosenbergs" by Fritz Jensen, both read with admirable restraint by Gisela May. Mr. Pankey's second group of songs included "Joe Hill" and the tragic anti-lynching song "Strange Fruit" which calls the bodies of lynched negroes hanging from southern trees a "strange fruit".

The whole of this German-American evening was warmly applauded by both the Americans and Germans in the audience. And it gave two Americans the opportunity to speak for their many compatriots who would much prefer this type of American-German cooperation to the American government support for renascent facism going on in West Germany.

Why Suppress Speidel Story?

London Paper Wants to Know

The London Pacifist weekly "Peace News" wants to know why the British press failed to report the disclosures about NATO Commander General Hans Speidel, published in GERMAN REPORT on August 2nd. Here in full are the comments from "Peace News" dated August 23rd:

"Although we think it obvious that one may expect a much higher degree of impartiality in the better type of Capitalist Press than it is ever possible to find in the Communist-sponsored Press, it is well to watch the latter for occasional reports on matters that the general press is ignoring.

"There is a remarkable instance of this in the East German Democratic Report for August 2. This paper reports that documents have recently been discovered in secret nazi archives in Berlin that reveal that the assassination of King Alexander of Jugoslavia and the French Foreign Minister, Louis Barthou, at Marseilles in October 1934, was undertaken on the instruction of Hitler, who wanted Barthou out of the way for reasons of policy.

"The assassination was carefully prepared under the code-name of 'Teutonic Sword', and the executive agent of the affair between Hitler and the actual assassin — who was killed as an immediate sequel to his act — was Captain Hans Speidel, then assistant to the German Military Attaché in Paris and now the General in Command of NATO ground forces in Germany.

"The documentation in the business is not complete, but a letter from Speidel to Goering which clearly points to it and to the fact that Speidel was the chief agent on the spot is published in facsimile.

"This information was available at the time when the most recent volume of Documents on German Foreign Policy, published by H. M. Stationery Office, was being reviewed in the Press. Much attention was paid to the approaches that were made to the Duke of Windsor in the early war years with a view to getting an arrangement between Germany and Britain.

"At the same time this much more sensational material was available to the Press, and we were given nothing of it at all. Why?

"It is, of course, possible that the documents reproduced in facsimile are forgeries. This possibility, however, does not mean that they should not see the light of day.

"Although our Press has paid no attention to them, there has not been such complete silence in the French Press. "Le Monde" has reported the existence of the letters, and has expressed doubts as to their authenticity. "Libération" has also mentioned them, and remarks: "If they are forged this should be easy to prove. Does Speidel, for instance, recognise his signature? ... Speidel has said nothing. This silence must not continue."

"Clearly the comments of General Speidel on these documents should be sought. For ourselves, we should also like to have some information from Press sources on why these allegations have not until now been permitted to cross the Channel."

Win a New Reader

Fill in the name and address of a friend, work-mate or acquaintance on the form below, and send it to

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We shall be pleased to mail sample copies of the paper to him or her.

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BERLIN NOTEBOOK

By John Peet

"How blind can you get?" might well be the title for some of my thoughts for the week. We all know about the odd case of John Foster Dulles, who for years has been clapping his telescope to his blind eye, and failing to see China. But I am afraid that some people in Britain suffer from "Dulles disease" too, at least as far as the German Democratic Republic is concerned.

Facts

At the risk of boring you, I must just repeat here that the German Democratic Republic, East Germany, is a biggish sort of country in the centre of Europe, with a population of over 17 million and ranking fifth in the industrial nations of Europe. But because it has not been officially recognised by countries in the west, many people in those countries, official and unofficial, still find difficulty in seeing it.

The first case-history I want to deal with is a relatively minor one. It concerns the film "The Witches of Salem", now playing to packed houses at the Academy Cinema in London.

"The Witches" is a very international film. It is based on a play, "The Crucible" by Mr Arthur Miller, which was adapted for the screen by French author Jean-Paul Sartre. The film was made as a coproduction by Borderie Films of Paris, and DEFA, the nationally-owned film company of the German Democratic Republic. The main actors in the film are French, but the extras were largely East German actors, and all the location filming was done in Mecklenburg, in the Democratic Republic, where a New England village was specially built for the purpose.

Joint Production

The film has received extensive reviews in the British press: yet in all the reviews that I have seen so far the fact that it was a joint effort of French and East German film producers has nowhere been mentioned.

As I said, a minor incident perhaps, but still rather significant.

The second case is more important: it concerns international sport, something which is supposed to bring nations nearer together, not tear them further apart.

Earlier this year, the Welsh soccer team visited Leipzig in East Germany to play the national team of the German Democratic Republic. East Germany, incidentally, won by 2 to 1. In accordance with usual international practive, microphones and relay facilities were made available to the "British Forces Network", the British Army Broadcasting Service in West Germany, and to the BBC.

This month, on September 26th, the East German team is travelling to Cardiff in Wales for the return match. Naturally enough, the East German radio wants to broadcast the match: but to everybody's surprise they were informed that the BBC and the British Post Office declined to make the usual land lines and other facilities available. The reason? "The British Government does not recognise the so-called German Democratic Republic, so no facilities will be extended" said a stuffy Post Office official.

Invisible Eleven

Which leaves us in the rather surrealist position that a presumably invisible soccer team from an apparently non-existent country will be playing in Cardiff on September 26th. It all seems rather silly.

But I am glad to say that in this case quite a lot of people in Britain think it is rather silly too: honourable mention must go to the London "Daily Mirror" which fired off an effective broadside against the ban. For the name of Britain as a reasonably sensible nation I can only hope that the ban will have been rescinded before these lines appear in print.

Campanologists

It is always a nice feeling to find that stories printed in GERMAN REPORT are ringing the bell in far-away places, so we were very pleased to see a short item in "The Age" of Melbourne, Australia, on June 29th which read as follows:

"Disconcerting use of the subject of immigration to Australia is made by the "Democratic German Report", an English-language news bulletin published in East Berlin.

"Examining the matter of those perennial reports of refugees fleeing East Germany for the West (and candidly admitting that the East German population has fallen by more than one million in the last ten years) the bulletin turns a neat argument.

"Why not, it asks, give pictures showing queues outside agencies which deal with immigration to Australia, Canada and other places, a caption such as "Thousands Flee Britain?"

"Put that way, the point which the bulletin is making follows logically.

"Investigations reported by West German newspapers, it says, show that the true political refugee from the East is in the minority.

"Most of the East Germans who have crossed the border have succumbed to the beckoning lure of the golden west with its promise of capitalist cake today rather than Communist cake tomorrow".

Ding — Dong

Having thus requoted myself, via Australia, I should like to reminisce about a short news paragraph which I sent dinging and donging backwards and forwards between Vienna and London some years ago.

It happened in 1945, when I was correspondent for Reuters News Agency in recently liberated Vienna. As is well known, foreign correspondents earn a large part of their keep by culling items of news from the local press. In one of the Vienna dailies I spotted an obscure item about the rediscovery of some church bells which had been carted away by the nazis to be melted down.

I clipped the story, wrote it up in the usual newsagency style, and put it on the line for London. From there it was put out again by Reuters, and landed in Vienna, where it was retranslated into German, and published next morning, slightly more prominently in another newspaper.

Repeater

This time it caught the eye of the BBC correspondent, who had missed it on the previous day, and he bonged it off to London. There it was promptly put on the air, monitored in Vienna, and believe it or not, it appeared next morning in yet another Vienna paper, this time on the front page.

At about this point I lost interest: for all I know the cables between Vienna and London are still overloaded with the tired old story of the church bells streaking back and forth.

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